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ABSTRACT

This book traces the development of public assistance programs in the United States from the 1930s to the present. Throughout the book, the differences between workfare and fair work programs and the role of workfare programs in the growing impoverishment of women are emphasized. The following topics are examined: women, welfare, and government work programs; job creation programs in the 1930s; decline of fair work programs and rise of punitive public assistance policies in the 1940s and 1950s; flowering of government work programs in the 1960s; revival of job creation programs in the 1970s; 1980s as the decade of workfare for the "truly needy" and prosperity for the "truly greedy"; and war on welfare in the 1990s. In the conclusion, the case is made for building on proposals from the past (including Employment Assurance from the Social Security Act, the National Resources Planning Board's "new bill of rights," the 1945 Full Employment Bill, and the original Humphrey-Hawkins Bill in the mid-1970s) and replacing workfare programs with fair work programs/policies that respect individual dignity and give all people choices about combining caretaking work in the home with wage labor while maintaining an adequate standard of living. Contains 741 endnotes. (MN)

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